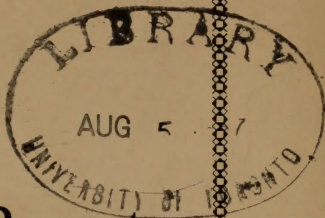


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Sixth Annual Report

OF THE

NEWFOUNDLAND BOARD OF TRADE

Incorporated June 12th, 1909.

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J. W. Withers, King's Printer

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COUNCIL OF THE BOARD OF TRADE, 1914.

MR. J. S. MUNN	President.
MR. C. P. AYRE		1st Vice-president.
MR. W. S. MONROE		2nd Vice-president.

Councillors:

MR. R. B. JOB,	MR. ALEX. MACDOUGALL,
“ W. G. GOSLING,	“ H. E. COWAN,
“ G. C. FEARN,	“ F. McNAMARA,
HON. JOHN HARRIS,	“ J. BROWNING,
MR. J. V. O'DEA,	“ R. F. HORWOOD,
“ R. G. WINTER,	“ W. H. FRANKLIN.

SIXTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE NFLD. BOARD OF TRADE.

IN presenting its report for the year 1914, the Council of the Board of Trade has to chronicle the results of a remarkable and trying year. The half yearly report, published in July last, dealt with the events of special interest to the Colony for the first half of the year, and the present report deals mainly with matters which have since developed, all of which are overshadowed by the disastrous European war, which is so vitally important to all sections of the British Empire. It may be of interest first to consider the effect which the war has had on the trade of the Colony.

At the outbreak of the war, a feeling of uncertainty and distinct uneasiness was manifested among all sections of the community, especially as to the effect the war would have on the Colony's trade, and more especially as regards the fish markets, and it is a good thing to be able to record that thus far Newfoundland has not suffered to any great extent from anything worse than this uneasiness. There were, however, many serious problems to be considered and dealt with, and more especially those connected with the important questions of exchange and war risk insurance for a time gave considerable anxiety, with the result that extreme caution was exercised, and great reluctance shown by the trade generally, in incurring any heavy commitments in purchases of the Colony's produce.

By clever organisation on the part of the special agents of the fish trade abroad, the first difficulty was finally overcome, and by the statesmanlike action of the British Government in their splendid handling of the question of war insurance, these difficult problems were finally solved, with the result that renewal of confidence was established, and prices of the Colony's chief export, codfish, gradually rose from the moderately low figure of about \$5.00 per qtl. (unfortunately talqual) to its present unprecedented figure of \$7.50 talqual.

Owing to the reluctance of the fishermen to accept the comparatively low prices offering for fish in August and the early part of September, and the reluctance of the buyers to pay higher prices owing to the uncertainty of the situation, it is regrettable to note that considerable consumption in the foreign markets was lost.

Too much stress cannot be laid on the importance of avoiding a loss of consumption by getting the early caught fish on to the market as soon as possible, as in the event of a fairly large or medium catch this may make all the difference between profitable and poor realization. On the whole, the price netted by the fishermen has been very satisfactory in view of existing conditions.

With the exception of the serious depreciation in the value of the lobster catch, hereafter more fully referred to, it may be stated in a general way, that the export trade of the Country has not so far suffered from the effects of the war.

The increased cost of imports has, however, been quite heavy, and probably more so than is generally realized.

This especially applies to food stuffs, such as flour, which was selling comparatively cheaper prior to the outbreak of the war, and it is an undoubted fact, that the increased price of this item alone due to the war has so far cost the people of the Colony nearly a quarter of a million dollars.

That an extended prolongation of the struggle cannot fail to have a seriously disadvantageous effect upon the credit and commerce of the greater part of the world cannot be doubted. The indirect financial loss to this Colony (it is earnestly to be hoped for a short time only) of her 2,000 picked men enlisted for active service, certainly is no small item, though if analysed, is an insignificant return for the marvellous protection afforded to Newfoundland by the successful operations of the British fleet. It has been the privilege of Newfoundland to make this contribution towards the defence of the Empire, and never were the Colony's funds more justly voted than for the equipment of these small forces.

Cod Fishery.

The Council of the Board of Trade has done its best to continue and make efficient the system by which it attempts to secure, during the progress of the fishery, reports from various centres, upon which can be based an estimate as to the general results of the catch. In this it has been partially successful, as it was known fairly early that the catches of the Shore and Bank fisheries were bound to prove small ones. The cause of this shortage may be ascribed largely to the lateness of the spring weather, due to the presence of ice on the coast, particularly on the section known as the French Shore and Green Bay, which sections showed a greater shortage than others.

It is estimated as a whole, that the Shore fishery was about twenty per cent. less than that of 1913 (which in itself was very much below the average), or roughly speaking, that there were 150,000 qtls. less Shore fish to market as compared with that year. The Bank fishery, from reliable figures, shows a shortage as compared with 1913 of about 28,000 qtls., or about 25 per cent. less. Owing to the failure of the authorities to establish and enforce some system by which every schooner returning from the Labrador fishery shall report her catch to the nearest Custom's authorities, it is very difficult to give reliable figures as to the result of the Labrador fishery. The Council expresses the hope that the Customs authorities will persist in their efforts to organise and carry out a system that will assure more complete returns. The exports from the Labrador coast were only about 90,000 qtls., a shortage of about 20,000 qtls. as compared with last year, and it is estimated approximately that the total catch of fish on the Labrador coast (including the Straits fishery) was in the neighbourhood of 310,000 qtls., or probably slightly in excess of last year's catch. It will thus be seen that the total available supply of fish for the foreign markets (other than green fish for the United States) was, on the whole, considerably less than the short supply of 1913.

Bait Depots.

The importance of the establishment of some system whereby our Banking and Shore fishermen can rely upon obtaining when required a supply of good fresh bait, has been the subject of much consideration at various times in the past, and in spite of the failure of some experiments

in this direction, the Council cannot too strongly urge the persistence of some effort to overcome the difficulties.

The time lost by some vessels in searching for bait is a serious one, especially in the case of the Banking fleet, with its expensive outfit. The Council learns that Messrs. Harvey & Co., Ltd., have recently erected at a very considerable cost a large bait freezer in the Rose Blanche vicinity, more especially intended for the use of the Banking vessels in which they are interested, and the result of this enterprise will be followed with interest. The erection of a bait dépôt at a port of call conveniently situated for the use of the bulk of the Banking fleet, such as at the mouths of Fortune or Placentia Bays, should be a paying proposition, and it would seem practicable to form some scheme whereby each and every Banking vessel operating from those bays would contribute to the erection and upkeep of such a dépôt. The result should have an important bearing on the result of the Banking voyage.

Markets.

The September and October shipments to Brazil unfortunately sold cheaply, and did not realize satisfactory returns; but the demand generally from Spain, Italy, Greece and Brazil, has been good, though the risks attendant on the export business are more than would be incurred in an ordinary year. It must be borne in mind that to offset the enormously increased charges for freight, war risk insurance, and exchange, due to the war conditions, a much higher price has to be obtained to nett the shipper the same result as would be forthcoming without these extra heavy charges, and it is only fair to suppose that the consumption of our fish must to some extent suffer in conse

quence, unless the price of other food stuffs is relatively high.

Green Fish for United States and Canada.

The customs figures shew that the export of salt bulk fish, for the six months ending December 31st, was 50,972 cwt., against 85,007 for the corresponding six months of 1913, a decrease of 34,035 cwt.

Duty on Codfish Into Portugal.

✓ It is with great pleasure that the Council learns that the efforts of the Government in this matter, which has been referred to more than once in the Board of Trade reports, have at last borne fruit, and that the discriminating duty of about 30c. to 35c. per qtl., against Newfoundland fish, as compared with that from Norway, has been removed, and that we are now placed on an even footing with our competitors. It may interest the members of the Board to know that this important matter was first brought by the Council to the attention of the Government as far back as April 1911, and has been the subject of constant reminders on various occasions since, and we think, whilst giving the Government full credit for the successful issue of their efforts, this can be pointed to as one of the concrete results obtained as a result of the Board of Trade agitation.

Lobster Fishery.

The Council very much regrets to have to call attention to the fact that the catch during the past year has been the shortest in the history of the fishery, and is estimated at about 11,000 cases, as compared with 16,500 cases last year, and no less than 43,500 in 1904, the banner year of the lobster fishery during the past decade.

In other recent years, the constant decrease in the catch has been to some extent compensated by an increase in price, but unfortunately this year, owing to the fact that the German market, which consumes something like 90 per cent. of the catch in an ordinary year, was entirely closed to us by the war, the price fell from \$24.00 per case, at which a small quantity was purchased by local merchants, to the low figure of \$13.00 per case. Only about 3,000 cases have so far been exported, and very few of these even have gone into consumption. A considerable quantity is still in the hands of packers, and outport collectors, who are naturally loath to part with them at the low figure obtainable; and on the other hand, buyers are far from eager to purchase at \$13.00.

The lobster trade is therefore faced with quite a serious problem, and it appears to be very doubtful whether the packing of lobsters during the season 1915 can be profitably undertaken. In view of this situation and acting in conjunction with the commission appointed by the Government, to inquire generally into fishery matters, the Council called a special meeting of the members of the Board of Trade on the 4th Dec. last, to consider firstly the question of making 1915 a close season, and secondly, the question of urging further legislation to preserve the fishery in the future. An interesting meeting was held, and after the matter had been thoroughly discussed, a resolution was adopted, recommending the close season for this year (1915) and urging suitable legislation.

Standardisation of Cull of Fish.

In last year's report, the Council called attention to the fact that both political parties at the last General Election

had signified their intention of dealing with this important problem, and now only make the comment that the problem has *not* as yet been dealt with, and begs to express the hope that seeing that all political parties are agreed upon the importance of the matter that it may be dealt with promptly in a "Non-party" spirit, with a view to its solution.

Pit Props.

Upon the outbreak of the war, the British colliery owners were faced with the problem of securing somewhere a supply of these to make up for the lack of supplies obtainable from the Baltic, and the English Board of Trade considered the matter of such vast importance as a possible factor in the war, that they despatched a special commission to Newfoundland and Canada to ascertain the practicability of securing supplies. Prior to this our Government had, actuated by patriotic motives, temporarily removed the restrictions against the export of these both from Newfoundland and Labrador. The English Board of Trade report indicates the suitability of Newfoundland wood for use as pit props, and this industry, at least during the present year (1915), is likely to assume no small proportions.

It would appear, however, that the Commissioners from the English Board of Trade have quite seriously underestimated the price at which these props can be produced and placed f. o. b. for export from Newfoundland, as they certainly are not procurable under present conditions at the low figures quoted in their report.

In 1914 two steamer cargoes were exported, of an estimated value of at least \$20,000 f.o.b., and it is expected

that something like 25 or 30 cargoes will be exported during 1915, the total value of which should be in the neighbourhood of at least \$250,000 to \$300,000. This industry has the advantage to the Colony of supplying fairly profitable employment at a period of the year when other local employment is not obtainable, and it is estimated that a very large proportion of the amount named above will find its way into the pockets of the fishermen, thus adding to some extent to their means of livelihood. The question of permitting a continuance of this industry is one that should receive the consideration of the authorities, as there seems little doubt that if it is allowed to proceed unrestrictedly, quite a large proportion of the most conveniently situated timber lands will be denuded. The effect of this may not apply to so great an extent, however, to the Labrador, where there are but few residents, and where the timber has hardly as yet been touched; and it must also be borne in mind that the Newfoundland timber can profitably be utilised in the Island by the means of saw-mills and pulp-mills, whereas it has not yet been proved that either saw-mills or pulp-mills can be made economically successful on the Labrador.

Municipal.

The agitation for improved civic conditions, started by the Board of Trade three years ago, has resulted in the appointment of a Commission to manage the affairs of the city for one year.

The duties of this Commission, known as the Municipal Board, are to reorganize the work of the city, so far as possible, and to prepare a new charter, or Municipal Act, for submission at the next session of the Legislature.

The Municipal Board has availed of the services of Mr. F. F. Longley, of the eminent engineering firm of Hazen and Whipple, to report upon the water supply of the city. The report made by him shows the necessity of increasing the quantity of water in the distribution system, and recommends certain work to be done. The total cost of this work is estimated at \$165,000. The Council is pleased to hear that the Municipal Board has already begun to carry out some of the improvements suggested, and trusts that those in charge of civic affairs will make the necessary financial arrangements and push forward the work until the city can be assured of full protection from the dangers of another conflagration.

The work of the Commissioners appears to the Council to have been faithfully done, and can hardly fail to result in improved civic conditions.

Absentee Landlords.

A meeting of those interested in this subject was held in the Board of Trade Room in March last, having been convened by the special sub-committee formed to consider the difficult problems connected with this matter. It was decided to convene a public meeting of citizens at a later date to further consider remedies for the present situation, and no doubt the sub-committee, who has this matter in hand, will do so at a convenient date.

Telephones.

An annual report without a reference to this important matter would (we regret to say) be incomplete, as in spite of every effort of the Council for years past no progress appears to have been made with a view to im-

provement and extension of this service. The Council hopes that the authorities will see their way clear to taking the public into their confidence in this matter, and explain the difficulties confronting them in giving effect to the long expected improvements.

Legislation re Weights and Measures and Transportation

It is earnestly hoped that the necessary legislation referred to in last year's report, giving effect to at least some of the recommendations of the Board of Trade, made after exhaustive investigation two years ago, which owing to pressure of other business it has hitherto been found inconvenient to introduce, will receive attention at the forthcoming session of the Legislature. The Council of the Board of Trade has recently drawn this matter again to the Government's attention.

Common Carriers.

In view of remarks in previous reports, the Council considers it due to the Reid Newfoundland Company to record an improvement in the transportation of freight by that Company during the past season.

Partridge Berries.

Wise legislation has been enacted since the last annual meeting of the Board for the benefit of this little industry. The new law practically prohibits the gathering of the berries before they are ripe. It has met with the approval of all interested, and has been well carried out.

The Minister of Agriculture secured during the past season the services of Mr. G. S. Torrey, a competent expert, and one of the Professors of the Grey Herbarium of

Harvard University, who after careful investigations has issued a most illuminating report, which the Council commends to the attention of all interested. As will be seen from the schedule at the end of this report, the quantity packed during the past season was about 6,500 barrels, the largest for some years, and in fact, with one exception, 1909, when the pack was over 8,600 barrels, the largest during the history of the industry. Unfortunately, the prices obtainable for the berries this year, have been very poor, owing to financial conditions of a result of the war, but this should be only a temporary setback, and it is hoped that the industry will be energetically exploited with a view to its further extension in the future.

Manufacturing.

Whilst as a result of the war, some of our local manufacturing companies have unfortunately found it necessary to reduce employment to some extent, it is pleasing to be able to state that, generally speaking, the business results have so far not been seriously affected.

Iron Ore.

The Council is pleased to hear that the Bell Island (Wabana) Companies, who, as indicated in the half-yearly report, were forced to shut down, or to restrict their output, owing to the depression in the steel industry, are reported to be opening up again, as the situation shows improvement. The industries on the Iron Island have quite an important bearing upon the internal trade of the Colony, and especially of St. John's and the Conception Bay settlements, who will therefore welcome the re-opening.

New Industries

The Council cannot point to the commencement of any new industry since last report, but hears of several large undertakings which are under consideration, and for which capital is being sought abroad. Amongst these may be mentioned the extensive shale areas in the Deer Lake vicinity, which were inspected and favourably reported upon by Professor Dunstan of the Imperial Institute, whose services were wisely engaged for this and other inspections of mineral areas by the Government.

Lectures.

A lecture, under the auspices of the Board, was given by Mr. H. C. Thomson in February last, on the subject of "A Train Ferry Service from Newfoundland to the Mainland." Our President occupied the chair, and His Excellency the Governor was kind enough to attend. Much interesting information was given as to certain phases of our fisheries, and their possible development.

Most instructive lectures were also given by Mr. Walter Duff, of the Fishery Board for Scotland, and by Dr. John Hjort, Chairman of the Norwegian Fisheries Commission. These lectures served to emphasize the undoubted fact that our fisheries are capable of very material development for the future benefit of our people.

H. R. H. the Duke of Connaught.

The visit of His Royal Highness the Duke of Connaught, was one of the pleasing features of the year.

Dominions Royal Commission.

A considerable amount of information upon the resources of Newfoundland, which it is hoped will prove valuable to

the interests of the Empire, was compiled by the Council and given by members of the Board and appointees of the Government before this important body, during its visit here in July last, and will no doubt be available for the future reference of our members when the report is issued. Amongst the subjects upon which evidence was taken may be mentioned :

“ The Newfoundland Fisheries,”

“ Steam Communication,”

“ Possibilities of Increasing our Imports from other
Portions of the Empire,”

“ Oil Shale,”

“ Lumber Export.”

The Commission also visited Bell Island and Grand Falls, where further evidence was taken in relation to the important industries with which those centres are connected.

Meetings of the Council.

Fifty-five meetings of the Council were held during the year, and amongst the most important matters discussed and dealt with were the following :

Railway Accidents,

Train Ferry Service,

Fish Inspection,

Inspection of Berries,

Local Shipbuilding,

Increase of Membership,

Imports of Canned Fish into France,

“ Newfoundland ” and “ Southern Cross ” Disasters,

Duty on Fish into Portugal,

Herring Inspection,

Harbour Dredging,
 War Risk Insurance,
 Cable Codes,
 Prohibition Fish Export from Liverpool in August,
 Press Messages,
 Common Carriers' Act,
 Pit Props,
 Technical Classes,
 Signalling and Harbour Light,
 Lobster Fishery,
 Standardization of Fish,
 Sealing Bill,
 Partridge Berry Bill,
 Municipal Matters and Civic Report,
 Labrador Survey,
 Dominions Royal Commission,
 Holidays,
 Dun Fish,
 Fishery Commission,
 Fish Exports from Germany,
 Cable Rates,
 Cable Rates to Spain,
 Stamp Act,
 Weights and Measures,
 Customs Act and Regulations,
 Herring Inspection,
 Telephones.

Death of His Grace Archbishop Howley.

The Colony suffered during the year a serious loss in the death of one of her greatest friends and patriots, His Grace Archbishop Howley. The Council took occasion

to place on record in their minutes, an expression of their regret at this loss, which they feel sure is borne by every member of this Board.

Finance.

The total revenue from all sources (other than donations) during 1914, and applicable to that year, was \$3,355.99, of which \$2,098.75 was from membership fees: the total expenses applicable to 1914 were \$4,096.84. The latter figure approximately indicates the normal annual expenses of the Board of Trade, and consequently the amount of revenue which the Council aims at securing. The actual deficit for the year's operations is \$740.85, for the liquidation of which the Board is again indebted to many voluntary subscribers.

The rooms have been very frequently utilised during the past year for general meetings of companies and for other meetings which have been a small source of revenue to the Board, but they have also been utilised to quite a large extent for meetings in connection with matters of public interest for which no charge has been made, and bearing in mind the large number and variety of people benefitting directly and indirectly by the Institution, the Council cannot help making the comment that it is not very creditable to the community that the financing of the Board should be dependent, as it certainly is at present, upon voluntary subscriptions, apart from the membership fees and other sources of revenue.

Schedule No. 3 of the present report consists of a statement of certain items of the actual revenue (apart from voluntary subscriptions to defray the deficit) and of

the expenditure applicable to each year for the past three years, and shows clearly the need of more members, or of some new source of revenue, in order to avoid the unpleasant practice of relying upon the special friends of the Board to make good the annual deficit.

Membership.

Thirty-seven members have been elected during the past twelve months; seventeen members have resigned. Of this seventeen, nine are not now residents of the Colony. The present membership is 241.

The Council trusts that there will be a larger increase in membership in 1915, for judging by other cities, St. John's should have a Board of Trade membership numbering at least 400.

One of the features of the year has been a marked increase in the number of members actually using the Board of Trade Rooms. This especially applies to the past five months, and is no doubt largely the result of the interest taken in the war news, but it has nevertheless become a habit with a large number of business men to attend between 12.30 and 1 p.m, during which time an exchange of views on business matters generally takes place, and the Council believes that the habit will continue long after the war is over.

Comparative Statement of Statistics.

A comparative statement is hereto appended, which will no doubt prove of interest to the members of the Board.

SCHEDULE I.

Comparative Statement of various figures for 1914 and 1913.

	1914	1913
Codfishery (Estimates)—qtls. ...	750,000	900,000
Labrador and Straits Fisheries :		
Ordinary cure exported from		
Coasts—qtls.	91,048	111,876
Green fish exported from Coast		
—cwt.	6,300	nil.
Ordinary and shore-cured La-		
brador brought to Nfld.—		
(estimate)—qtls.	200,000	140,000
Bankfishery—qtls.	124,067	152,374
Sealfishery—Seals	233,719	272,965
Lobster Pack—Cases	11,017	16,565
Canned Salmon Pack—Cases ...	1,492	2,995
Whale Fishery—Whales... ..	168	222
Salt Bulk and Frozen Herring ex-		
ports—barrels	78,923	68,432
Partridge Berry Pack (estimate)—		
barrels	6,500	3,736
Iron Ore Exports—tons. . . .	1,245,797	1,243,200
Pulp Exports—tons	51,605	51,487
Paper Exports—tons	40,077	44,424

SCHEDULE II.

Statement of Pack of Partridge Berries Since 1904.

Year	Barrels packed	Approx. Price f. o. b. St. John's.	Value
1904 ...	1827 ...	\$5.70 per brl. of 20 gals....	\$10,414.00
1905 ...	1255 ...	5.70 " " ...	7,153.00
1906 ...	2103 ...	6.20 " " ...	13,038.00
1907 ...	3302 ...	6.20 " " ...	20,472.00
1908 ...	4417 ...	6.20 " " ...	27,385.00
1909 ...	8655 ...	5.70 " " ...	49,333.00
1910 ...	6181 ...	5.00 " " ...	30,905.00
1911 ...	2913 ...	5.50 " " ...	16,021.00
1912 ...	4500 ...	5.50 " " ...	24,750.00
1913 ...	3736 ...	9.00 " " ...	33,624.90
1914 ...	*6500 ...	4.50 " " ...	29,250.00

\$262,345.00

* Estimate.

SCHEDULE III.

Comparative Statement on Certain Items of Revenue and
Expenditure for Years 1912, 1913, 1914.

REVENUE.	1914	1913	1912
Members Subscriptions ...	\$2,098 75	\$2,080 00	\$1,800 00
Hire of Rooms for meetings ...	93 00	42 00	81 50
Fish Inspection ...	\$597 58		\$1,034 21
Less Inspector's Salary.	540 00		816 00
	<u>57 59</u>	<u>183 42</u>	<u>218 21</u>
Partridge Berry Inspec'n	\$279 65		\$122 00
Less Inspector's Salary.	111 86		48 80
	<u>167 79</u>	<u>63 17</u>	<u>73 20</u>
EXPENDITURE.			
Cost of Market Reports	\$538 46		\$581 70
Less received from Subscribers ...	284 00		261 50
	<u>254 46</u>	<u>201 13</u>	<u>320 29</u>
Printing and Advertising ...	112 50	77 50	143 91
Stationery and Supplies ..	85 57	46 98	47 17
Total of Expenditure applicable to each year ...	4,096 84	3,966 53	4,051 38
Total of Revenue (apart from donations) ...	3,355 99	3,283 14	3,400 42
Excess of Expenditure over ordinary Revenue ..	740 85	683 39	650 96





